

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Method and apparatus for launching applications on a computer. A launcher allows a user to quickly determine which applications are installed and to start one or more selected applications. The launcher accesses an operating system registry to determine which applications are installed and where each application is installed. The launcher presents information in a file formatted using a scripted language such as hypertext markup language (HTML), so that the file can be read by a standard web browser application, such as the well-known Netscape Navigator™ or Microsoft Internet Explorer™. Thus, a user is presented with a standard graphical user interface that he or she most likely knows. The user makes the selection by clicking with his or her mouse. The display may simply list the installed applications, or it may list all known applications, showing unavailable applications with a different visual attribute than installed applications, for example, dimmed or grayed out text. When the user selects an application, the launcher determines the location of the selected application from tags in the HTML file and launches the selected application, suppressing any browser dialog boxes normally associated with remotely starting applications by preventing the browser from navigating to the selected application.